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T U E S D A Y H I G H L I G H T S

- + Secretary-General says peace-keepers cannot implement mandate in Bosnia and Herzegovina due to expiration of cease-fire and escalation of hostilities; UNPROFOR must be maintained, but situation requires changes on ground.
- + Special Representative for former Yugoslavia deplores outbreak of fighting in Sarajevo; appeals to parties to begin dialogue under auspices of UNPROFOR.
- + Croatian Government signs status of forces agreement with UNCRO; International Tribunal for Former Yugoslavia sends investigative team to Croatia.
- + Security Council concludes discussion of situation in occupied Arab territories; Sudan says Israel should realize peace cannot be achieved through unilateral decisions based on use of force.
- + Secretary-General says situation in Tajikistan remains tense, but results of Moscow talks justify United Nations efforts and maintenance of UNMOT.
- + Disarmament Commission holds exchange of views on specific disarmament items.
- + United Nations police adviser shot dead in apparent robbery attempt in Angola.

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United Nations peace-keepers are unable to implement Security Council resolutions relating to Bosnia and Herzegovina due to the expiration of the cease-fire and the escalation of the confrontation there, according to Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. He told correspondents at Headquarters today that the peace-keepers were increasingly coming under attack, and that the situation required changes on the ground. He made those comments after briefing the Council on the situation in the former Yugoslavia,

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following his meeting with senior United Nations officials in Paris on Friday. He also dealt with Angola, Burundi, Georgia, Rwanda, Tajikistan and East Timor.

The Secretary-General stressed that he was determined to maintain the United Nations forces in the former Yugoslavia, and to safeguard the peace-keepers there. He noted that more than 160 United Nations troops had been killed, and more than 1,400 injured, in the region. France -- the largest contributor -- had sustained the most casualties. It was important to contain the fatigue of troop-contributing countries and to avoid the "Somalia syndrome". He said that he had asked the officials on the ground for recommendations, and that he would report in turn to the Council on what action should be taken.

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Special Representative Yasushi Akashi has deplored the outbreak of fighting in Sarajevo today, saying it set back the clock in the search for a peaceful settlement in Bosnia and Herzegovina. He appealed to the leaders of the parties to the conflict not to squander what chances remained for peaceful dialogue under the auspices of the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR).

The Special Representative stressed that there was an alternative to the military option that the parties seemed to have chosen -- they could cooperate with United Nations efforts to restore peace step by step. The first step must be the immediate silencing of all weapons, followed by the normalization of the humanitarian aid operation to bring much-needed relief to the civilian population. Finally, serious talks must begin on shaping a viable long-term political solution.

The latest fighting in Sarajevo started when Bosnian Government forces fired four mortar rounds into a Bosnian Serb barracks, prompting intense firing in return, according to a United Nations spokesman. During the day, a Russian peace-keeper was seriously wounded, while a French peace-keeper was slightly wounded, and an unmanned armoured personnel carrier was destroyed. Meanwhile, the French soldier shot by a sniper in Sarajevo last week died yesterday.

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The Croatian Government has signed a status of forces agreement with the United Nations Confidence Restoration Operation in Croatia (UNCRO), a spokesman for the Organization announced today. He described the signing as a very positive development.

Meanwhile, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia has sent a four-person team to Croatia on a two-week mission. The team will investigate the recent events in Western Slavonia and the shelling of Zagreb with cluster bombs.

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The Security Council today concluded its three-day discussion of the situation in the occupied Arab territories. Several speakers said the Council must reject Israel's attempts to effect a fait accompli in occupied Jerusalem prior to negotiations on its status next year. They called on the Council to take action to ensure that Israel reversed its recent decision to expropriate Arab land in East Jerusalem.

The representative of Mauritania strongly condemned Israel's decision, saying the successes of the peace process depended on the political will of the two parties to comply with their commitments. Unilateral acts could only sow suspicion and doubt, and dim the hopes of the people of the region for peace. The Sudanese representative said Israel had one objective: the annexation of East Jerusalem and the declaration of a unified Jerusalem as its capital. Israel sought to empty East Jerusalem of its inhabitants through land confiscations and the building of settlements. The Council must take decisive action to convince Israel that peace could not be achieved through unilateral decisions based upon the use of force.

"The patience of Arab and Islamic peoples is running out as they witness daily the Israeli arrogance and the Israeli persistence in humiliating Arabs and Muslims in defiance of all resolutions of the Security Council, because Israel is exempt from implementing them, thanks to the biased position of the United States", the representative of Libya said. He cautioned that the double standard being employed by a permanent member of the Council might drive people to reconsider the usefulness of a United Nations that had lost its credibility.

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The situation in Tajikistan remains tense, particularly on the border with Afghanistan, according to the Secretary-General. In a report dated 12 May, he said several factors had combined to create serious difficulties for the political process being promoted by the United Nations there. Those factors included the Government's position regarding the deployment of its troops to Gorno-Badakshan; the manner in which it had carried through the elections on 26 February; the opposition's refusal to participate in elections even if they were postponed; its de facto withdrawal from the Joint Commission; and the escalation of hostilities in April.

The Secretary-General noted that the Tajik parties had agreed during recent consultations in Moscow to extend the current cease-fire agreement until 26 May. They had also agreed to hold the fourth round of inter-Tajik talks in Almaty beginning on 22 May and to include on the agenda the fundamental institutional issues and consolidation of the statehood of Tajikistan. Meanwhile, the Russian authorities had recognized the validity of the cease-fire agreement for their forces in the country. Those results provided grounds for continuing United Nations efforts and maintaining the United Nations Mission of Observers in Tajikistan (UNMOT), he concluded.

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The Disarmament Commission has begun its 11-day session with an exchange of views on specific disarmament items. The representative of Japan said it would be a mistake for the Commission to focus solely on nuclear issues, given that the armed conflicts of the past 50 years had been fought largely with conventional weapons. The issue of arms transfers concerned all countries and was closely related not only to a country's political and security situation, but also to its economic needs, she said.

Several representatives cautioned that any final recommendations from the Commission on international arms transfers should be without prejudice to the right of States to equip and maintain armed forces for the purpose of defence. On the issue of nuclear disarmament, the representative of India said the Commission should not be satisfied with reiterating the goals of the Declaration of the Third Disarmament Decade, but should give specific suggestions. Recent disarmament steps constituted only a technical management of the arms race and were insufficient, he said.

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A United Nations police adviser -- Raul Ruben Aguirre of Argentina -- was shot dead in Luanda, Angola, yesterday, according to a spokesman for the Organization. An investigation has been launched into the incident, although it appears that Mr. Aguirre was killed during an attempted robbery with no political motive.

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